

Title: Educating the Masses for the Middle Path Strategy and the Political Action of the Islamic base Political Parties Post Malaysia 12th General Election, 2008

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Abstract: The 12th Malaysian General Election (GE), 2008 has changed the political landscape of Malaysia. For the first time in Malaysian 50 year's political history, the ruling party the Front National (BN) has lost its two thirds majority in the Parliament and was defeated in several states. The reasons for the lost was due to the achievement of the opposition party to garner votes from the non Muslims and the capability to create a strong coalition to become an alternative to the existing government, besides the issues of governance that diminished the credibility of the ruling party. The Malaysian political history depends highly on how the political party can influence the majority of the Malay Muslim community, including the support from the non-Muslims. The supports from both communities became the essence of the achievement of the Front National (BN) since 1957. In the context of political Islam, the competition was between the United Malaysian Nationalist Organization (UMNO), the strongest coalition partner in the governing party and Pan Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS). The achievements of UMNO is due to the image of toleration in defending Islam (the middle path) and manage to sideline PAS as an Islamic extremist and fundamentalist. Since the year 2004, the political competition took another route. The BN in trying to defend the Malay and Muslim rights loose the support from the non Muslims and the vote was transferred to the coalition of opposition party under the name of the Pakatan Rakyat (The People's Coalition PR). The changed happens especially to the open policy of PAS concerning the issues of women and the non-Muslims. The impact can be seen to the voting trend in which the non-Muslim can accept and votes for PAS candidates. These trends continue especially after the 12th General Election, 2008 in the series of by-elections.

Keywords: *Malaysian General Election, politics, UMNO,PAS,BN*

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